

July 2017 From the Board Room

North Carolina Public Schools

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To: Lynda Fuller <Lynda.Fuller@dpi.nc.gov>;

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JULY 2017

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school students in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. You may view all State Board of Education member and advisor information [online](#). To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit the State Board of Education's [website](#).



Draft ESSA State Plan Discussion Continues

Board members continued their previous month's discussion of the state's draft plan for the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA). NCDPI has been working on the development of its ESSA plan since early 2016. The first draft of the *ESSA State Plan* was posted online Sept. 29, 2016, with the fourth and latest draft posted [online](#) June 26.

The discussion addressed revisions to the submission timeline to the US Department of Education (USED). This includes additional Board discussion in August followed by submission to Gov. Cooper for his 30-day review. The Board is expected to approve the plan at its Sept. 7 meeting with final submission to USED by Sept. 18. Federal Policy Director Lou Fabrizio noted that North Carolina's approved plan may be amended later if needed and that the state is not locked in for 10 years.

Deputy State Superintendent Maria Pitre-Martin addressed North Carolina's proposed theory of action for ESSA, which focuses on an adaptive environment for personalized, digital-age learning. She addressed some of the best practices this approach could include, such as competency-based progressions, flexible learning environments, personal learning paths and learner profiles.

Accountability Services Director Tammy Howard spoke on school performance grades and the academic achievement indicators included in the Elementary/Middle School and High School Accountability Models. She also discussed the federal requirement to set long-term goals for increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps, and interim progress measures toward meeting the long-term goals. She noted that the 15-point grading scale for school performance grades would continue through the 2018-19 school year.

District and School Transformation (DST) Director Nancy Barbour concluded the presentation noting her staff would be identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools after the 2017-18 school year. These schools are the lowest performing five percent of Title I schools based on performance, as well as all high schools in the state with graduation rates below 66.7 percent. CSI schools would be identified every three years. After the 2018-19 school year, DST staff would identify Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools, or schools that have consistently underperforming subgroups. TSI schools would then be identified annually.



NC INNOVATIVE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Members Hear Plan for Innovative School District/ I-Zones

North Carolina Innovative School District Superintendent Eric Hall outlined the broad framework aimed at turning around several of the state's chronically low-performing schools. The new district, formerly referred to as the Achievement School District, will follow a six-phase strategy during the 2017-18 school year prior to operating the first group of schools in 2018-19.

During the coming school year, the Innovative School District (ISD) will focus on reviewing school performance data to help identify schools for potential partnership. In addition to weighing student achievement data, Hall said that he and his team also will be conducting evaluations of qualifying schools to determine viable options for improving student outcomes in identified low-performing schools. This will help to determine if it is in the best interest of students and the local community to partner with the ISD or to consider other options, if available.

Hall anticipates selecting at least two schools for the ISD in the 2018-19 school year, and a total of five schools by 2019-20. All five will be elementary schools or include elementary grades. A list of prospective schools is expected to be released in September. The final list of schools will be presented to board members in December for approval.

Schools approved by the board will undergo six months of planning for transfer to the Innovative School District, for which Hall will be selecting a charter or educational management organization (CMO/EMO) to operate the school for a period of five to eight years under contract with the State Board of Education.

Innovation Zone Provides Additional Support for Districts with ISD Schools

Hall told the board that an additional provision of the 2016 law allows for the creation of an Innovation Zone or I-Zone within local school districts with ISD schools that provides additional support for the district's low-performing schools.

The I-Zone is a strategy that provides a group of low-performing schools within a local district the opportunity to benefit from additional flexibilities (e.g. scheduling, calendar, curriculum and even staffing flexibility) that are often aligned with those provided to charter schools in the state. I-Zones are created for a period of five years, with options to extend if outcomes are proving effective.

The process for launching an I-Zone would align with the development of the innovative schools, with planning during the 2017-18 school year and operations starting in 2018-19.

Local Districts Benefit from \$1M in CTE Grants

Twenty-two local school districts and 18 community colleges will share a little over \$1 million in grant funds as a result of the Board's approval of Career and Technical Education Incentive Grants.

Districts receiving grants are:

Asheboro City	Henderson
Asheville City	Hertford
Beaufort	Madison
Buncombe	Mt. Airy
Caldwell	Nash-Rocky Mount
Carteret	Newton-Conover
Columbus	Randolph
Cumberland	Rockingham
Duplin	Rowan-Salisbury
Elkin City	Rutherford
Greene	Wilkes



Although the grant awards will benefit all students, the goal is to serve a significant number of high need, underserved or nontraditional participants in the career pathway. Districts receiving the grants have demonstrated a consistent record of collaboration among pathway partners, including employers, and have targeted pathway measures that provide evidence of positive outcomes for those served and the community.

The grants are designed to encourage partners to generate more positive outcomes in their career pathway programs.

Seven Charters Receive Approval to Open in 2017

Seven charter schools will open their doors to students in the new school year following Board approval of their ready-to-open (RTO) status:

- * Emereau (Bladen County)
- * Movement School (Mecklenburg County)
- * Unity Classical Charter School (Mecklenburg County)
- * UpROAR Leadership Academy (Mecklenburg County)
- * Coastal Preparatory Academy (New Hanover County)
- * Peak Charter Academy (Wake County)
- * Pine Springs Preparatory Academy (Wake County)



Since receiving their initial charter application approvals, the charter boards have been diligently working through their planning year, developing required plans and procedures for the school to ensure it is ready to open in the new school year. This includes attending a number of workshops that focused on the governing board, staffing, student accountability, instructional programming and operations.



Rutherford County to Raise Compulsory Attendance Age

Board members approved a resolution from the Rutherford County Board of Education that will result in the implementation of a pilot program to raise the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 years beginning Aug. 1.

SBE Highlights: A [checklist](#) of Board actions is posted every month at the conclusion of the meeting. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be held Aug. 2 - 3 in the 7th Floor Board Room, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC. Board materials will be available [online](#) by clicking on the Meetings tab.



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